

Claims:

1. Towelette dispenser apparatus comprising:  
multiple towelettes having connections between ends of adjacent individual towelettes,  
a container for holding the multiple towelettes,  
an open end on the container,  
a lid connected to the container positioned over the open end of the container,  
a cover on the open end for sealing the container,  
an orifice in the lid for passing towelettes out of the container,  
one or more lobes protruding into the orifice,  
wherein a first towelette and a leading portion of a subsequent towelette are pulled  
through the orifice, and the connections between the first towelette and the subsequent  
towelette are separated, and  
wherein a leading portion of the subsequent towelette remains outside of the lid and  
secured within the orifice.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the lid further comprises a stationary lid and a  
hinged trap door cooperating with the stationary lid.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the orifice is formed between the trap door and  
the stationary lid.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the lobes are on the trap door and on the  
stationary lid and wherein the lobes on the trap door cooperate with the lobes on the stationary lid  
for holding the leading portion of a towelette.

5. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the trap door is connected to the lid by a living  
hinge.

6. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising door lock stops for holding the trap door in a dispensing position.
7. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a central depression in the lid for holding the leading portion of a towelette when the cover is closed.
8. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising lugs for controlling movement of the trap door.
9. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the orifice and lobes are located only on the trap door.
10. The apparatus of claim 9, further comprising a slit from the edge of the trap door to the orifice.
11. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the trap door is half of the lid.
12. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising stiffening ribs on the trap door.
13. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the lid comprises two trap doors.
14. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the two trap doors are connected to the lid at opposite edges of the lid.
15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the trap doors are connected to the lid by living hinges.
16. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the orifice and lobes are on a first trap door.
17. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the second trap door has no orifice or lobes.
18. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the two trap doors are mirror images.
19. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the orifice is created at the intersection of the two trap doors.
20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein lobes on each trap door cooperate for holding

a leading portion of a towelette.

21. The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising door lock stops for holding the trap doors in a dispensing position.
22. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the cover is connected to the lid by a living hinge.
23. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the cover overlies the lid when in a closed position.
24. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the lobes pinch the leading portion of a towelette.
25. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the lid comprises a lower lid and an upper lid.
26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the lower lid is permanently fixed within the container and the upper lid is connected to the container by a living hinge.
27. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the lower lid has a lobe extending into an opening.
28. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the upper lid and cover are hinged on opposite sides of the container.
29. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the lower and upper lids are sealed under the cover, when the apparatus is not in use.
30. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the upper lid has the orifice and lobes.
31. The apparatus of claim 30, wherein closing the upper lid pinches the leading portion of a towelette between the lobe on the lower lid and the lobes on the upper lid.
32. The apparatus of claim 26, further comprising a split in the upper lid for threading towelettes.

33. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein a living hinge connects the lid to the container.
34. The apparatus of claim 33, further comprising a slit in the lid for threading towelettes.
35. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising parallel V-shaped brackets on an inner surface of the cover.
36. The apparatus of claim 35, further comprising outward extending pins on a detachable hinge complementary to the parallel V-shaped brackets.
37. The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising a hinge plate connected to an orifice plate by a living hinge and wherein the orifice plate is connected to the container by a living hinge.
38. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein closing the cover folds the living hinge between the hinge plate and the orifice plate and folds the living hinge inward toward the center of the container.
39. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein opening the cover unfolds the living hinge until the hinge plate and the orifice plate are in the same plane.
40. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the hinge plate is detachably hinged to the parallel V-shaped brackets via the outward extending pins.
41. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the orifice and lobes are on the orifice plate.
42. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the orifice and lobes are on the hinge plate.
43. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the orifice and lobes are formed at the intersection of the hinge plate and orifice plate.
44. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the lid further comprises a hole and a

telescoping member movable through the hole and wherein the orifice is in the telescoping member for holding the leading portion in the telescoping member.

45. The apparatus of claim 44, further comprising one or more rims around the telescoping member for preventing the telescoping member from falling into the container and from being completely extracted from the lid.

46. The apparatus of claim 44, further comprising a central opening in the telescoping member leading to the orifice.

47. The apparatus of claim 44, further comprising a hinged handle on an outer end of the telescoping member for moving the telescoping member.

48. The apparatus of claim 44, further comprising a rib for retaining the telescoping member in a fixed position.

49. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a central molded dish within the lid with the orifice within the dish.

50. The apparatus of claim 49, wherein the dish is made of soft, relatively flexible material.

51. The apparatus of claim 49, wherein reaching through the orifice stretches the orifice and allows the user to grasp a towelette.

52. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the orifice is offset from the center of the lid.

53. The apparatus of claim 52, further comprising a second orifice large enough for a user to reach into the container and retrieve a towelette.

54. The apparatus of claim 53, further comprising a slit leading from the first orifice to the second orifice for threading a towelette.

55. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the orifice and lobes are various configurations.

56. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the orifice further comprises recesses between the lobes.
57. The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the recesses are triangular.
58. The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the recesses are rounded.
59. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the orifice and lobes are curved lobes between curved slots.

60. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the orifice and lobes are lobes and wherein triangular recesses are formed in an orifice thermoplastic shelf and below the shelf is an elastomer layer with radial slits.

61. A dispenser for storing and dispensing towelettes, comprising:
  - a container for holding multiple towelettes, the container having an open end,
  - a dispensing lid attached to the open end of the container, wherein the dispensing lid comprises:
    - a cover that is hingedly attached to the lid, such that the cover engages a portion of the lid to seal the open end of the container when the cover is in a closed position,
    - at least one dispensing portion that is hingedly attached to the dispensing lid such that the dispensing portion may be pushed inward into the container for accessing a towelette,
    - an orifice located on the dispensing portion, wherein the orifice is defined by one or more lobes which protrude from the dispensing portion and by one or more recesses through the dispensing portion,
    - wherein the lobes and recesses of the orifice engage and separate the towelettes as each towelette is pulled through the orifice of the dispensing lid.

62. The dispenser of claim 61, wherein two dispensing portions are provided, the

dispensing portions being mirror-imaged, and the orifice is defined at the intersection of the dispensing portions by lobes and recesses configured on each of said dispensing portions.

63. A method for storing and dispensing towelettes, comprising:

providing a container of multiple towelettes, the towelettes having bridges between adjacent ends of the towelettes, such that the towelettes are separable along the bridges by supplying a separating force;

accessing a first towelette using a dispensing lid attached to an open end of the container, wherein the first towelette is accessed by pushing down on a dispensing portion that is hingedly attached to a dispensing lid;

pulling a first towelette and a leading portion of a second towelette through an orifice in the dispensing portion of the dispensing lid, wherein the orifice is defined by one or more lobes protruding from the dispensing portion and by one or more recesses through the dispensing portion;

engaging the first and second towelettes with the lobes and recesses of the orifice;

applying a separating force sufficient to separate and remove the first towelette from the container and dispensing lid;

maintaining the leading portion of the second towelette outside of the dispensing portion by securement with the lobes and recesses of the orifice; and

closing a cover to seal the dispensing lid and the container, wherein the cover is hingedly attached to the dispensing lid.

64. Dispenser apparatus for towelettes, comprising a series of towelettes joined end to end with relative weak bridges, a container holding the series, an open end on the container, and a towelette dispenser connected to the open end, the towelette dispenser having an

opening with restrictions for allowing individual towelettes from the series to pass through the opening, the restrictions holding a leading end of a towelette while a preceding towelette is pulled away from the opening for breaking the bridges between the ends of the towelettes, the towelette dispenser being movable with respect to the open end of the container for reaching into the container through the open end and pulling a towelette from the series into the opening.

65. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the towelette dispenser comprises two opposing flaps hinged from opposite sides of the open end of the container and having adjacent edges over the container, and wherein the opening comprises partial complementary openings formed in the adjacent edges.

66. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the series of towelettes comprises a roll of towelettes which are dispensed from a middle of the roll.

67. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the dispenser comprises a cap connected to the open end of the container, at least one hinged flap movable into the container, and having the opening for moving the flap inward in the container and grasping an end towelette in the series and pulling the end towelette through the opening.

68 The apparatus of claim 67, further comprising a cover hinged on the cap for closing over the hinged flap and sealing the open end of the container.

69. The apparatus of claim 67, wherein the at least one hinged flap comprises more than one hinged flap having outer edges hinged on the cap and having inner edges in close proximity to each other, and wherein parts of the opening are distributed among the inner edges of the hinged flaps.

70. The apparatus of claim 64, further comprising a cap connected to the open end of

the container, wherein the dispenser further comprises a flap hinged into the cap, and further comprising a cover hinged on the cap for closing over the hinged flap and sealing the open end of the container.

71. The apparatus of claim 70, wherein the opening is in the flap and the flap is slit opposite the hinge for threading a lead towelette from the series through the slot and into the opening.

72. The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the opening has a central open area and lobes extending inward from a peripheral area of the opening toward the central open area, and having an enlarged portion of the opening connected to the slit for receiving the leading towelette.

73. The apparatus of claim 72, further comprising a center support lobe extending from an inner edge of the cap opposite the hinged connection of the flap for cooperating with and blocking at least a part of the enlarged portion of the opening to hold and permit outward passage of a lead towelette.

74. The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the flap and the cover are hinged to the cap respectively by first and second living hinges at spaced positions on the cap.

75. The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the flap is hinged on a hinge extending within the cap, and further comprising a ledge extending inward from an inner edge of the cap opposite the hinge.

76. The apparatus of claim 75, wherein the flap rotates on the hinge inward in the container, and wherein the ledge prevents outward movement of the cap.

77. The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the cap is removable from the open end of the container and attachable to an open end of another container.

78.The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the cap is removable from the open end of the container for filling the container with a replacement series of towelettes.